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**Brief Bio:** For the past nine years Jen has worked with children and families in Washington and Henry Counties providing resource and referral. Families know they are able to contact Jen for assistance in ensuring their children have insurance coverage, a medical home, a dental home and any other immediate needs that assist in providing care to their children. Prior to working with Public Health, Jen worked 3 ½ years for the Department of Human Services as a social worker serving children and families in Washington County.

**Key facts:**

- a. Who is covered by hawk-i
- b. Personal story of a family
- c. Why hawk-I outreach is important

**Statement:**

The hawk-i program is a valuable insurance option for many working families in Iowa. We are all aware that employer insurance plans continue to increase in price each year. Along with the increase in price many families experience less coverage with their employer plan for their families. With health care reform many insurance plans will no longer provide single coverage plans for children. We know every family's situation is different and there is no way to ensure all children have health insurance. But Iowa can do our part to make sure as many children as possible have access to multiple insurance plans.

I provide hawk-I outreach to families in Washington and Henry County. As an outreach worker my primary responsibility is ensuring families in these counties have knowledge of the program. I am able to reach many families by providing brochures and information to businesses, insurance agents, the faith community and schools. All outreach workers in Iowa work closely with the Workforce Development Offices. We are contacted when there is a factory closing in our county and are asked to attend meetings held at the factory with the employees affected to provide information about the hawk-I program.

At one factory closing I spoke to employees about hawk-i coverage and the application process. On the hawk-i brochures I have my contact information for families to call if they have questions once they get home. A mother called me once she got home and had a chance to discuss hawk-i insurance with her husband. She had questions about how their income would be determined, specific questions about the application, as well as, when they should apply

since they had coverage through the employer for a limited time. I am certain without a local person to call with their questions; they would not have applied for hawk-i. The family did apply for hawk-i and were accepted. Each year the family provides income information to determine continued hawk-i eligibility. This family continues to contact me with questions that arise in regards to the program.

This family has been a great advocate for the hawk-i program. They have been vocal in letting other families know that hawk-i has provided comprehensive insurance for their children. I can honestly say that I receive 1-2 phone calls a week from families with questions about hawk-i insurance. It is important to note that the hawk-i brochure is printed with the 800 number to talk to someone in Des Moines about the program. The brochure also has a stamp place on it with contact information for me. Families have the choice to call DM or a local person. It is not easy for many families to ask for assistance so having the ability to talk to someone in their community about questions they have about hawk-i makes this process less intimidating.

I encourage this committee to recommend the continued funding of hawk-i outreach to families in Iowa. Families need local access to assistance in this process.